full time winter and summer. This is one of the reasons why most projects on the Khabur have been failures. The overhead costs are very heavy in relation to the land available.

The Government has an irrigation project partly in operation which will irrigate when completed an area of about 100,000 dunums (25,000 acres). Other projects are under study but their execution will be postponed indefinitely since the Government lacks the necessary capital.

To summarize, it would appear that not only all cultivable lands in Jazirah are already cultivated, but that farmers, in search of lands, have started using marginal lands with insufficient rainfall, and unless the price of cereals keeps at the level of last year there will follow in the coming two years a gradual decrease in the area planted, with heavy losses to individual farmers.

POPULATION OF JAZIRAH

During Turkish rule and up to the French occupation, Jazirah was a wasteland controlled by Bedouin tribes whose submission to the Turkish law was nominal.

I. The Arab Tribes

The tribes, dominated by Shammar, ruled the land and spoiled it, frustrating all attempts at agriculture. They lived on sheep and camel breeding and charged tribute from merchants for protection, each tribe within its boundaries. Moslem and Christian families from Mardin and Nisibin owned lands around what is now Kamishli, Amuda and Dirbassiya, and they traded with the tribes, buying their wool, samneh, and hides and supplying them with their needs and credit. The ownership of land for agriculture seems to have been incidental to the commercial activities of these families.

The tribal boundaries established during the Ottoman rule are still effective. Shammar claims the right of grazing from the Iraqi border at Tal Koshak to Tal Alu and south to Fadghami on the Khabur. There is another small concentration of a Shammar branch around Derbassiya known as Shammar Ezzor.

The neighbor of Shammar to the west is the Tay tribe. Its lands extend from Kubur el Bid and Kamishli south to Tal Brak. The tribe took to agriculture relatively early and in its area are some of the best lands of Jazirah.

619 To the south of Tay is the Jubur tribe. This tribe is composed
241 of two branches, the Jubur of Jagjag concentrated around Tal Brak
233 and south to Hassakeh, and the Jubur of the Khabur from north of Hassakeh to Fadghami. The Jagjag Jubur have taken to growing cereals besides grazing, but the Khabur Jubur find little employment in agriculture because their area is arid and those who do not work on irrigated lands are mostly sheep grazers.

619 Another big tribe migrating between the Euphrates and Jazirah
241 is the Baggaret el Jabal. This tribe is completely nomad. It spends
233 the winter in the plans toward Deir Ezzor and migrates in the summer to Jabal Abdel Aziz. It used to cross the Khabur to graze in
721 Jazirah but a dispute arose with Shammar Ezzor in 1949 over the ownership of some villages below Derbassiya, and supported by the Kurds, Shammar was able to drive Baggara back across the Khabur.

221 Of these tribes mentioned, Shammar is still mostly nomadic
621 though its lands in the north are good for agriculture. The Tay tribe is completely sedentary, Jubur Jagjag have become mostly sedentary, while Jubur Khabur are in a measure nomads because of the unsuitability of their lands, and the Baggara are completely nomads.

619 In tribal politics, Shammar stands alone. Tay and the Jubur
721 are traditional allies against Shammar. The Baggara are enemies of Shammar and friendly to Jubur. Raids of Shammar on Jubur are frequent especially in the region of Fadghami. The last big conflict between Shammar and Tay occurred in 1951 when over a hundred persons from the two parties were killed in a fight over the ownership of the lands south of the Rad.

624 The Bedouin Sheiks of the different Arab tribes formerly re-
624 ceived money grants from the Ottoman Government under the guise of expenses for the maintenance of law and order in their regions. These grants were in essence bribes to keep the Sheiks quiet. Unfortunately, the French continued this system, and relied on the Sheiks to control the tribesmen by giving the Sheik a fixed annual salary, each according to his importance. In this way, the Government implicitly renounced its right to deal directly with the individual Bedouin and dealt with him only through his Sheik.

This situation, which lasted until about a year ago, strengthened the Sheik enormously in the eyes of his tribesmen, and the Sheik
627 invariably exploited the situation to his personal benefit. Thus,
425 in the Bedouin districts of Jazirah, the rapid development and
427

241 251 amount he has to store. The jifrs are usually dug around the village to guard them from theft. The condition of the future wheat crop in Jazirah becomes known by the end of March. At that time, if the forcast is favorable, the surplus wheat stored in the jifrs is brought to the market, but if the future crop is considered in a bad condition the wheat remains stored to be planted in the fall.

The second most important item of Jazirah commerce is the summer crops of rice, cotton, sorghum and sesame. They follow the same pattern of wheat and barley.

II. Cattle and Sheep

439 231 221 233 Jazirah has an active trade in transit shipment of cattle and sheep. Before the last few years, it was itself a provider of sheep. The Bedouin tilled a part of the land and grazed his sheep in summer and fall on the land around the village. In winter and spring he became a nomad again and migrated with his flocks to the south and east. It was customary to pass scores of villages in winter which were completely deserted and the mud houses sealed with one guarding left for the whole village. The expansion of mechanical agriculture reduced the grazing lands considerably and the number of sheep dwindled.

At present, sheep and cattle are imported from Turkey and Iraq. They cross the border on foot and are either smuggled in or pay customs duties. They rest in Jazirah and are fed, then transported to Aleppo by train, or, in springtime, on foot.

III. Imported Goods

438 The main imports of Jazirah are agricultural machinery and spare parts, textiles, fuel wood and building materials. Foodstuff which is not grown in Jazirah is also imported. Because no statistics are available, it is worthwhile to make a study of the volume and value of Jazirah commerce for the next few years as an indication of the development of the region.

IV. Commercial Future of Jazirah Towns

The commercial future of Jazirah towns and especially of Qamishli is assured. Jazirah already produced in 1946 17% of the

7:Lewis S-5 (ca. 1940-45) 1948 MD1 Syria MD1

IS ONE WHERE DESERT MERGES INTO THE SOWN. THE REGION THE RAINFALL

regimen is Mediterranean in type, practically all the precipitation falling in winter, the summer being characterized by drought and great heat. In the east the rainfall is sporadic and unreliable and in most years is less in total quantity than in the west. Selemiya has a mean annual rainfall of 344 millimeters (13.5 inches). On the west-facing slopes of Jebel Bil'as rainfall is relatively heavy, though highly variable, and it permits tree growth. The present eastern limit of close agricultural settlement and of permanent unirrigated cultivation is near the 200-millimeter isohyet;[2] it was approximately the same in Romano-Byzantine times. Any further extension of agriculture to the east would mean great risk of crop failure and of increased soil erosion by wind and water.

In the cultivated west the soil is heavy and clayey, but farther to the east it is light and friable, with a high sand content and practically no humus. In Jebel Bil'as the soil is intermediate between these two types, liable to erosion by wind in summer and water in winter.

Over the greater part of the region the two main elements in the natural vegetation are low xerophilous scrub[3] and ephemeral grasses which appear in early spring and wither away in summer. The roots and rootlets of both the permanent scrub and the annual vegetation help hold the soil in place. In Jebel Bil'as these types of vegetation are well developed, and the hills are favorite spring pasture grounds for the sheep of peasants and Bedouins. Isolated trees grow in the Palmyrene ranges far to the east throughout the area within the 200-millimeter isohyet, and even just to the east of it, in country believed to have a mean annual rainfall of less than 200 millimeters (7.9 inches). On the northwestern slopes of Jebel Bil'as tree growth is more abundant. Nothing demonstrates better the positive rainfall anomaly of the hills as compared with the arid plains to the north and south.

At the present time the landscape of Jebel Bil'as is at the best parklike, the trees being scattered, except in the valleys, where clumps of three or four grow together. Few trees are taller than 20 feet. The *Pistacia* genus is represented by *P. terebinthus* (probably *P. palaestina*) and *P. vera* (the pistachio tree). The wood of these two trees, hard and slow-burning, is much valued as a fuel. Scrub oak also occurs, and in wadi bottoms thick-leaved evergreens. Shrubs and herbaceous plants are scattered everywhere.

IRRIGATION

The long summer drought makes irrigation necessary for most crops

[2] A full account is given by M. Zohary: Geobotanical Analysis of the Syrian Desert, *Palestine Journ. of Botany*, Jerusalem Ser., Vol. 2, 1940, pp. 46-96.

7:Lewis S-5 (ca. 1940-45) 1948 MD1 Syria MD1

area. The English merchants who passed through the hills in 1678 noted that Jebel Bil'as was "covered with Trees, which, for the most Part, were the small *Pistacho*'s which the *Arabs* pickle with Salt; but eaten green, are good to quench Thirst"; and in 1691 they ascended a ridge to the east of Jebel Bil'as where the tree cover is now sparse and found it "cover'd on both Sides with great plenty of Turpentine-Trees," which grew "very thick and shady," several of them "loaded with a vast Abundance of a small round Nut."[15]

In spring, when surface water is available and the pasture is excellent, the hills are full of flocks; and several hundred thousand sheep, together with some goats and camels, pasturing each year for about three months cause much damage. Bedouin and peasant shepherd families burn vegetation on the spot, and woodcutters from Selemiya and the villages cut large amounts of the valued slow-burning pistachio wood. Vegetation has been destroyed in these ways since prehistoric times, but at certain periods the process has been quickened. Between 1914 and 1918 the Turkish authorities took great quantities of wood as fuel for the railroads. Local notables say that within living memory trees extended beyond Aquerbat; that is, several miles into the country now cultivated and treeless. The westernmost range, Jebel Shomariye, has lost all its woods, and a ridge to the east, which was "overgrown in some places" with terebinth trees in 1908,[16] is today bare. A new danger to the soil of the hills has resulted from the high grain prices now prevailing, the growing population pressure in the region, and the tendency of Arab tribes to settle down to agriculture; for now increasing areas of land on the western fringe of the hills are being plowed.

Malaria control on the plain must clearly be accompanied by soil conservation in the hills, and, ideally, both should be part of a larger scheme of regional rehabilitation. Such a scheme would cover, among other matters, irrigation, malaria control, vegetation conservation, farming practices, and grazing rights. It would mean radical changes in the region; it would require a large capital outlay; and it would necessitate government action of a scale and vigor practically unknown in Syria. It is impossible to discuss here whether such a scheme would be economically justifiable, or possible within the present social and political framework. One can only emphasize that some such comprehensive action must eventually be taken if the problems of the region are to be solved.

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[15] "An Extract of the Journals" (*op. cit.*), pp. 132 and 143 [Miscellanea Curiosa, pp. 123 and 137–138].

[16] Alois Musil: Palmyrena, *Amer. Geogr. Soc. Oriental Explorations and Studies No. 4*, 1928, p. 44.

11: Hourani S-4 (no date) 1946 MD1 Syria MD1

production. A reform in the system of land-tenure would also help. In some parts of Lebanon small free-holdings are to be found, but in Syria large estates are the rule, and 'métayage' is perhaps the most common form of tenancy. The 'musha'' system of communal ownership, under which holdings are periodically re-distributed, is also widespread. In the past twenty years the Mandatory authorities have made progress with land-survey and the settlement of title, and with the division of lands held under the 'musha'' system But greater tasks remain. Large tracts of the country are still in the possession of a small number of landowners, who for the most part are not interested in improving either the productivity of their lands or the standard of living of the workers. The creation of a free peasantry, by the break-up of the large estates and the appropriate use of the vast state-domains, is still in the future. The facilities for agricultural credit are very inadequate; there are practically no co-operatives and very few agricultural banks, and in consequence the peasant is in the clutches of the money-lender. The tax-system is regressive and weighs heavily upon the cultivator.

A special problem is created by the Beduin, of whom there are over half a million. Their economic function is the breeding of camels in the steppes and desert regions where agriculture is impossible. They are divided into tribes of which the most important are the various Anazah tribes—the Ruwala, the Feddan, and the Sba—in the steppe and desert south and west of the Euphrates, and the Shammar in the Jazirah. Traditionally contemptuous of the settled population and of all government, in the past they have been a serious obstacle to agriculture; but during the last two generations or so the Government has made a serious attempt to control their wanderings, and to prevent their raiding each other and the settled regions, while allowing them to preserve their tribal law and organization. At the same time their economic position is being undermined by the decline in the demand for camels. This makes it the easier to induce them to settle on the land. In the Jazirah, in the Hauran and elsewhere tribes can be found which are abandoning the wandering life. They take to breeding sheep as well as camels and become semi-sedentary; then they begin to cultivate the land and in time become wholly sedentary, thus continuing

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241 433 trated in the fall and winter seasons. Thus around 70% of the area in crops is usually planted to wheat and barley, and these two cereals contributed £S 59.2 million and £S 70.8 million or approximately 19% of the total value of Syria's exports in 1952 and 1953. Although a considerable number of summer crops are grown, including sorghum, maize, rice, pulses and vegetables, by far the most important of these is cotton. The latter now rivals wheat as the most valuable crop of the country even though the 1953 acreage planted to cotton was only 10% of that sown to [439] wheat. Exports of cotton and cotton seed amounted in 1952 and 1953 to £S 131.2 million and £S 140.2 million, or 38% and 40% of the value of all exports. Orchard crops such as olives, nuts, apricots and other fruits also assume some importance in agricultural production, although they 233 439 take up less than 10% of the planted area. Animal husbandry, based principally on sheep and goats, is primarily a pastoral industry without a close link with settled agriculture. Exports of livestock and livestock products including hides and skins, samneh (clarified butter), cheese and eggs, amounted in 1953 to almost £S 48 million or around 13% of the total value of exports. Live animals alone contributed £S 23 million, although such exports were offset by imports, primarily from Iraq, to a value of £S 7.1 million.

241 433 Much of Syria's agricultural output is consumed on the farm and therefore does not enter the market economy. From the returns of the agricultural production tax, which is levied only on produce brought to market, it may be estimated that only around 40% of the production of wheat, maize and sorghum and less than 30% of the output of lentils is sold.

Industry

433 464 During the postwar period industry has steadily forged ahead, although its contribution to national income is probably still only between one-fifth and one-fourth that of agriculture and animal husbandry. The number employed in manufacturing is difficult to estimate, since the 1947 census provided no occupational breakdown, and industrial enterprises required to register with the government generally understate the number of workers employed. Fragmentary data collected by the mission indicate that employment in more or less mechanized manufacturing establishments, many of which are very small, may be between 35,000 and 40,000. If

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In view of the desirability of increasing the role of vegetables in the Syrian diet and of their potential as a domestic and export cash crop, governmental stimulus would be of great benefit.

v ANIMAL HUSBANDRY

The problem of raising the production and quality of livestock has been comparatively neglected. Inadequate nutrition, high incidence of disease and mortality, and poor breeding all depress livestock yields far below what they should be. Livestock now accounts for less than 20% of the total contribution made by agriculture and animal husbandry to national income. This contribution to national income could undoubtedly be raised substantially because the possibilities for improvement in animal husbandry practices are vast and the demand for livestock products both at home and abroad is likely to increase more than proportionately as standards of living rise.

Better nutrition, control of disease and breeding are all necessary. Of the three, improvement in nutrition is by far the most important. Irrespective of breed, an animal will not be productive unless it is well fed. In fact the genetic factors in any breed cannot be fully developed and appraised unless nutrition is adequate. Similarly, low nutritional standards inevitably lower the resistance of livestock to disease and limit the effectiveness of control measures.

Migratory Livestock

Over 80% of the livestock other than fowl consist of sheep and goats, and most of these are taken by Bedouins on annual migrations into the Syrian desert or steppe for grazing. The available vegetation is sparse and of short duration. As is usual under desert or semi-desert conditions, there is generally overgrazing in the areas close to permanent water supplies, and the poorer the season—in terms of rainfall—the heavier will be the concentration on such areas. During severe winters when winter growth ceases at an early stage and when the herbage may be destroyed by early frosts, there is a high mortality rate from the combined effects of malnutrition, helminthiasis and exposure.

It has been suggested that much of the mortality could be avoided by

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293 the provision at permanent watering points of shelters, together with a reserve of feeding stuffs. The provision of such shelters may, however, involve the authorities in difficulties caused by undue concentration of stock at these watering points in bad seasons, as well as in possible complications arising from competition for the food and shelter. Shelter and rations could not be provided for more than 20-30 days, and the transport of stock feeds for even this short period might be exceedingly difficult. Although shelter and feeding during such a period would no doubt stave off the peak mortality that is likely to occur in spells of unusually severe weather, it would contribute little or nothing toward a solution of the basic problem, to restore to health and good physical condition flocks that have become so debilitated through malnutrition and an increasing worm burden that they are killed off in spectacular fashion by a short spell of severe weather.

The gravest difficulty is the failure of winter grazing, which may be due to a variety of causes: shortage of early winter rains, paucity of growth because of persistent low temperatures, or actual destruction of young herbage by frost. This leads to malnutrition, which in turn allows a rapid build-up of worm burdens—a build-up which is again accelerated by heavy concentration of flocks in the few better areas.

In the circumstances, it seems likely that a more practical approach to the problem would be to provide stocks of feeding stuffs at centers convenient to the farms, where the sheep summer. Flockowners would then be urged to return their sheep to the farms as soon as it became apparent that the grazing had failed, and before the sheep had lost too much condition. Once back on the farms they could be fed on concentrates, supplied by government at favorable rates, supplemented by whatever crop residues may be available as roughage. Straws, dried sugar-beet pulp, bran, coarse grains, cotton seed and cake, can all be made available in an emergency such as is envisaged, and the veterinary service could take in hand mass treatment of flocks to reduce the worm count, and perform whatever immunizations may be necessary.

Elsewhere in this report it is stated that at least a third of the arable land lies fallow each year and that animal manure is almost wholly used as fuel. It is more than possible that the introduction of the practice of returning the sheep in an emergency for winter feeding on the farms may lead eventually to the growing of winter fodder crops, such as berseem, on land that would otherwise be idle. Several cuttings of berseem or lucerne

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could be taken during an average mild winter; if conditions in the desert were good enough to afford adequate keep for the lambing flocks, the berseem crop from the earlier cuttings could be dried, but it would be an advantage to graze off the final crop with stock.

Once farmers become accustomed to a rotation that includes the provision of stock feed and manuring of land through grazing of fodder by sheep (a system particularly suited to maintaining fertility on light wheat and barley lands), then they are well on the way to a balanced system of agriculture, and improvement of livestock types can be pushed ahead rapidly.

To return to the proposal for providing shelters and stocks of reserve foodstuffs in the desert, the mission suggests that the government might experiment by erecting a few such shelters in carefully selected areas, stocking them with food reserves of various kinds. The cost need not be prohibitive. A single shelter sufficient for 300-400 sheep can be built of stone walls shaped like an X, and will cost no more than £S 600. A number of these could be erected in a single location along two quarter circles situated to the left and right of the prevailing wind direction (see Diagram 7). Each group of shelters would be provided with a stock of foodstuffs consisting principally of grain straw mixed with some concentrates. Sheep would be fed for periods of 20-30 days only during exceptionally severe weather. On this basis the feeding and operational costs could probably be kept to £S 2.40 per sheep, of which the flockowner might be called upon to pay at least £S 1 per head.

The mission strongly recommends that both methods be given a thorough trial and that for this purpose up to £S 500,000 per annum be made available during the period 1955-1960.

The provision of additional desert wells at carefully selected sites might be a means of reducing losses in dry seasons. The danger of course is that the provision of permanent water in areas that formerly could be grazed only in particularly favorable seasons may eliminate the very factor that has enabled these areas to retain a reasonable cover of vegetation, and in a few years the result may quite well be a very considerable total reduction in the keep provided. In this matter of utilizing more desert wells a better line may be to investigate the possibility of tapping underground water supplies that seem likely, with the aid of flood or stored surface water, to support small Bedouin settlements, each with a limited acreage of irrigation. Experience in Egypt shows how rapidly the fertility of irrigated

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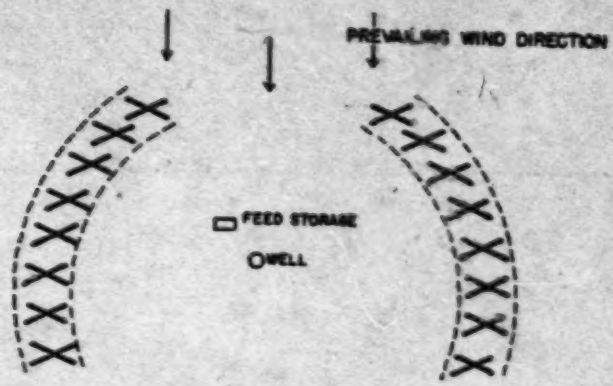
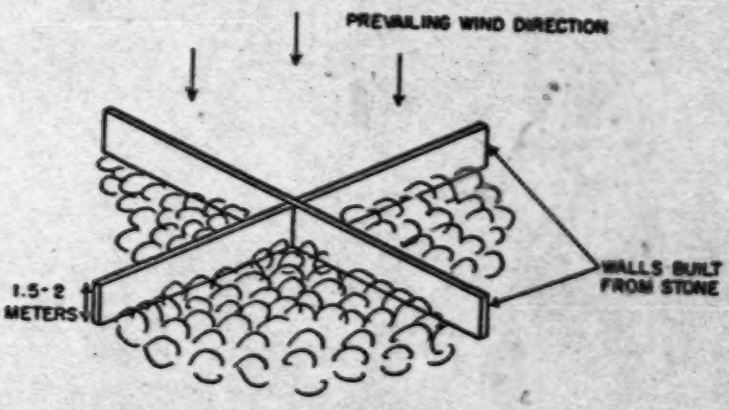
233 desert land may be built up, starting with groundnuts and going on to vegetables, citrus and grain. But there must be sufficient water, sufficient capital and sufficient determination.

PROPOSED LAYOUT OF DESERT SHELTER DIAGRAM 7



SEMI-CIRCULAR GROUPING OF SHELTERS



DETAIL OF SINGLE SHELTER

Any considerable increase in the number of wells should be made only after careful study of the grazing areas, and it is essential that there should be a simultaneous acceptance by the Bedouins of controlled grazing, e.g., a complete program of deferred rotational grazing which will allow areas

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to set seed in turn. Such a system of control can be based only upon a thorough ecological survey of grazing areas, supported by experiments in grazing management, including the possibility of reseeding with types of perennial herbs and grasses which experience in Australia, South Africa, Morocco and Algeria has shown to be more or less winter-hardy and drought-resistant.[18]

Reseeding would not require plowing, but could be carried out by broadcasting the seed from a light truck or jeep immediately after the rains. During the next two years the yield of selected native and foreign grasses could be tested in small enclosed plots before reseeding operations are undertaken on any considerable scale.

It will be apparent that measures to improve the quality and carrying capacity of desert grazing must be based on actual experiment. The mission recommends that a thorough ecological survey of the desert steppe grazing areas be undertaken as soon as possible, concurrently with experiments on methods of management. It is understood that FAO will probably be assigning a part-time botanical ecologist who will concentrate on the grazing areas; in addition an ecologist will be working in the group of countries to which these problems are common. An FAO sheep specialist with considerable experience of grazing management may also be posted to Syria. It seems that sufficient specialist staff is likely to be available during the next few years to enable a vegetation map to be prepared and to supervise field experiments on the management of the various types of desert grazing. The mission recommends the expenditure of £S 200,000 in support of the program of investigation and in applying the results to selected areas.

The institution of any system of controlled grazing, the establishment of irrigated settlements, and even the protection of reseeded land until the new grass has become well established will present a problem in administrative control. Simple policing measures are likely to be ineffective, and it is essential that the full cooperation of the Bedouins be secured for these measures. A special effort should be made to persuade the leaders and subleaders of the tribes pasturing their flocks in these areas that the control measures are being exercised for the benefit of the Bedouins, and that it is accordingly in their own interest to ensure the success of the experiments. Probably the best method of approach would be the creation of local Bedouin authorities to supervise the measures.

[18] See Annex C, p. 312.

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ANNEX C *NOTES ON AGRICULTURE*

1 POPULATION, REGIONS AND SOILS

Rural Population

162 619 Syria's agricultural population can be divided into groups differentiated by their social order.

233 *Nomadic tribes.* Bedouin tribespeople form an important unit of the rural population, numbering an estimated 150,000 and living in various stages of settlement from pure pastoral nomadism to almost permanent agricultural communities. Among the larger tribes the Tay and part of the Jubur have become practically sedentary, the Shammar and Shashans remaining nomadic or semi-nomadic. There are also numerous small nomadic tribes roaming the desert between the cultivated belt and the Jordan border. These harvest the scanty desert grass with their flocks of sheep and goats and their herds of camel and a few cattle, and contribute considerably to the country's livestock production. A large part of Syria's meat, wool and dairy products is produced by the Bedouins. Their standards of living and education are quite low.

The increasing exploitation of arable land for crop production during recent decades correspondingly reduced the grazing area and, may, if continued, threaten a considerable reduction in livestock.

162 241 511 *Settled villagers.* The nearly two million villagers spread over 5,500 compact villages form the most important segment of the agricultural population. They are the true cultivators of the soil whether they own the land or work on it as tenants or laborers. A large number farm entirely for subsistence. Even where there are large community pasture lands, the farms are usually small, frequently too small to give an economic return. Consequently incomes are generally low and many landowners, tenants and sharecroppers are constantly indebted to moneylenders. Although illiteracy among the villagers is on the decrease, education remains at a low standard.

The village people produce most of the crops, raise part of the livestock and supply the country with the bulk of its food and raw materials. Their agricultural activity as a rule is dominated by manual and draft animal

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Within this belt there is a large area of cultivable land still uncultivated, mainly for reasons of shortage of labour, lack of means of communication, and political insecurity. Uncultivated land is generally used for grazing, and in the 'Duck's Bill' the grass grows high enough for hay cutting. At present the cultivated area is some 481,500 hectares (1,188,000 acres), and it is estimated that an area about as large again remains uncultivated.

The population at present numbers 111,300, of which half are Kurds. Owing to its remoteness and unsettled state, there has been no survey and settlement of land title. New land is taken under cultivation under the old Ottoman right by which ownership is acquired if cultivation can be proved for ten consecutive years.

In the Jezira most of the land is held by large cultivators. In the Euphrates province much of the land has until recently been owned by the villagers, but now the land is passing into the hands of city landowners as pump irrigation is introduced (as in Iraq). The pumps and buckets are supplied against payment in kind by the town merchant or moneyed class; wherever irrigation brings more lands under cultivation, the ownership of the extra land is divided equally between the villagers and the suppliers of water.

The system of tenure is the usual share-tenancy; in the Jezira, according to local custom, the landlord takes one-eighth of the crop to pay taxes, and the remainder is shared equally between landlord and cultivator, the proportion being determined by the supply of labour. With the introduction of machinery—there were about thirty tractors in the area in 1942—the division into employer and labourers has developed: the landowner using the tractor on the land and employing wage labour.

Owing to the scarcity of labour, the position of the agricultural labourer in the Jezira area is better than in the rest of Syria. Health conditions, however, are bad: the Kurds suffer from trachoma and villagers in the Kamichlia district from malaria. In the Euphrates region, the position is worse: the agricultural labourer is weak and underfed, living a hand to mouth existence and exploited by all.

Both in the Jezira and in the Euphrates region there is scope